

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A web site system comprising:  
a server; and  
two or more web sites operating on the server;  
wherein one of the web sites is a parent and one of the web sites is a child of the parent; and  
wherein the parent has one or more assets and wherein the parent and child are configured to share each of the assets using one of the set of modes consisting of  
a first mode in which both the first and second objects can utilize the asset, but only the first object can modify the asset,  
a second mode in which both the first and second objects can utilize the asset, and both the first and second objects can modify the asset,  
and  
a third mode in which the first object can utilize and modify the asset, but wherein the second object can utilize the asset until the second object attempts to modify the asset, at which time a copy of the asset is generated and the second object can utilize and modify the copy of the asset.
2. The web site system of claim 1 wherein one of the web sites is a descendant of the child site and wherein the child and the descendant are configured to share one or more assets of the child using one or more of the first, second and third modes.

3. The web site system of claim 2 wherein if an asset shared between the child and the descendant is also shared between the parent and the child, the asset is shared between the child and the descendant in a mode which is no less restrictive than the mode in which the asset is shared between the parent and the child.
4. The web site system of claim 1 wherein the parent and the child share a plurality of assets as a set.
5. The web site system of claim 1 wherein the parent and the child share one or more assets individually.
6. The web site system of claim 1 wherein the parent has one or more assets which are not shared with the child.
7. The web site system of claim 1 wherein the child has one or more assets which are not shared with the parent.
8. The web site system of claim 1 wherein each web site can share assets only with direct descendants of the web site.
9. A method comprising:
  - selecting two objects which have a hierarchical relationship wherein a first one of the objects is a parent of a second one of the objects;
  - selecting one or more assets of the first object; and
  - sharing the selected assets of the first object with the second object, wherein each of the selected assets is shared using a mode chosen from the group consisting of
    - a first mode in which both the first and second objects can utilize the asset, but only the first object can modify the asset,

- a second mode in which both the first and second objects can utilize the asset, and both the first and second objects can modify the asset, and
- a third mode in which the first object can utilize and modify the asset, but wherein the second object can utilize the asset until the second object attempts to modify the asset, at which time a copy of the asset is generated and the second object can utilize and modify the copy of the asset.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the second object sharing one or more the selected assets with a third object which is a child of the second object, wherein the one or more of the selected assets are shared using one or more of the first, second and third modes.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein if an asset shared between the first object and the second object is also shared between the second object and the third object, the asset is shared between the second object and the third object in a mode which is no less restrictive than the mode in which the asset is shared between the first object and the second object.

12. The method of claim 9 wherein the first object and the second object share a plurality of assets as a set.

13. The method of claim 9 wherein the first object and the second object share one or more assets individually.

14. The method of claim 9 further comprising the first object utilizing one or more assets which are not shared with the second object.

15. The method of claim 9 further comprising the second object utilizing one or more assets which are not shared with the first object.
16. The method of claim 9 wherein each object can share assets only with direct descendants of the object.
17. A method comprising:  
selecting an asset of a first object; and  
sharing the selected asset with a second object, wherein the second object is a child of the first object in a hierarchical structure;  
wherein sharing the selected asset comprises enabling the first object to utilize and modify the selected asset, enabling the second object to utilize the selected asset until the second object attempts to modify the selected asset, making a copy of the selected asset when the second object attempts to modify the selected asset and thereafter disabling the second object's ability to utilize the selected asset and enabling the second object to modify and utilize the copy of the selected asset.
18. The method of claim 17 further comprising sharing a second asset of the first object with the second object, wherein sharing the second asset comprises enabling the first object to utilize and modify the second asset, enabling the second object to utilize the second asset and preventing the second object from modifying the second asset.
19. The method of claim 17 further comprising sharing a second asset of the first object with the second object, wherein sharing the second asset comprises enabling the first object and the second object to utilize and modify the second asset.
20. A computer readable medium containing instructions configured to cause a computer to perform the method comprising:

selecting two objects which have a hierarchical relationship wherein a first one of the objects is a parent of a second one of the objects;  
selecting one or more assets of the first object; and  
sharing the selected assets of the first object with the second object, wherein each of the selected assets is shared using a mode chosen from the group consisting of  
a first mode in which both the first and second objects can utilize the asset, but only the first object can modify the asset,  
a second mode in which both the first and second objects can utilize the asset, and both the first and second objects can modify the asset, and  
a third mode in which the first object can utilize and modify the asset, but wherein the second object can utilize the asset until the second object attempts to modify the asset, at which time a copy of the asset is generated and the second object can utilize and modify the copy of the asset.

21. The computer readable medium of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises the second object sharing one or more the selected assets with a third object which is a child of the second object, wherein the one or more of the selected assets are shared using one or more of the first, second and third modes.

22. The computer readable medium of claim 21 wherein if an asset shared between the first object and the second object is also shared between the second object and the third object, the asset is shared between the second object and the third object in a mode which is no less restrictive than the mode in which the asset is shared between the first object and the second object.

23. The computer readable medium of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises the first object and the second object sharing a plurality of assets as a set.

24. The computer readable medium of claim 23 wherein the set comprises a class of assets.
25. The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein the class of assets is a child of a base asset class.
26. The computer readable medium of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises the first object and the second object sharing one or more assets individually.
27. The computer readable medium of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises the first object utilizing one or more assets which are not shared with the second object.
28. The computer readable medium of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises the second object utilizing one or more assets which are not shared with the first object.
29. The computer readable medium of claim 20 wherein the method further comprises each object sharing assets only with direct descendants of the object.